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HEALTH

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As attorneys on both sides of the debate over President Obama's health care legislation presented arguments before the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Wednesday, West Palm Beach attorney I. Jeffrey Pheterson said he identified with them in some ways.

Pheterson has presented legal arguments before two of the three judges tasked with deciding the case.

Pheterson remembers Judge Stanley Marcus from when he was a U.S. attorney in South Florida in the 1980s. He also argued cases before Marcus when he was a district court judge in Miami.

Pheterson said he has appeared several times before Chief Judge Joel Dubina. He has not litigated any cases before Judge Frank Hull.

"What I know of both of them (Marcus and Dubina) is that they are very thorough, very thoughtful judges," Pheterson said. "They have both taken a lot of time to really examine everything before them and thoroughly research cases."

Although the judges have a network of legal clerks working for them, Pheterson speculated that Marcus and Dubina spent a lot of their own time researching the legal issues before they heard the arguments.

"They will be extremely prepared," he said.

West Palm Beach attorney Glenn Cameron, who has argued several cases before the federal appellate court, said that appearing before the panel of judges requires thorough preparation.

Cameron, who has been practicing law for more than 28 years, said the three experienced judges probably had an answer for every argument either side brought up.

"They ask a lot of questions," he said. "And if they perceive any weakness in your argument, they won't let it go."